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AN

ANSWER

TO

JAMES O'KELLY's

VINDICATION OF HIS APOLOGY, &c.

AND AN

EXPLANATION

OF THE

REPLY.

By NICHOLAS SNETHEN.

I speak to them that know the Law, Rom. vii. 1.

He that is first in his own cause, seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him. Prov. xviii. 17.

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Eph. iv. 3.

PHILADELPHIA: PRINTED BY S. W. CONRAD.

1802.

To the Friends of Bishop Asbury, and the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church:

RESPECTED BRETHREN,

TO whose patronage could a subject of this kind be so properly committed, as to yours; whose unshaken attachment, in every varying scene, prove you to be friends indeed? The difference of your interests, your modes and habits of life, and even prejudices, by education, serve only to display the genuineness and sincerity of your affection as christians: for what but christian love can bring men of different nations, avocations, and religious opinions, into the same unvarying and constant unity, and friendship?

Many of you know what was old methodism, and are competent to judge what changes, if any, have taken place from the beginning; and I am persuaded that you are well satisfied that the same spirit now animates the body; and that no radical alterations have been effected in the great principles of our excellent predecessors. Many of you have had the confidence of Mr. Asbury, and must know, if he has swerved in any measure from his first profession.

I speak, brethren, with the greater confidence upon this subject, as I know that, notwithstanding your different interests, it is impossible for you all to be blinded by prejudice: for your wisdom and discernment, are sufficient to enable you to judge in this matter; and your goodness and integrity, will not suffer you to pervert the truth.

Union of affection, appears to me to be the greatest of all relative ties: To think and speak alike, however desirable, is nothing in comparison to this. We all have our opinions; mine differ from those of many of my friends; and though I have the greatest com-

placency and confidence in my favourite notions, yet I cheerfully offer them, under exifting circumftances, at the fhrine of brotherly love: being fully perfuaded, that for any one to differ from me in what I believe to be fcriptural, involves no moral guilt; nay, what is more, I do not think that my brethren would be purer in their intentions, and more difpofed to do good, if they fhould think exactly as I do, in thofe points where we differ.

Senfible that men's opinions are feldom, if ever, formed or corrected in the heat of controvercy; and that their fentiments and characters are different things, to be treated in a different manner; I fo calculated the reply, that it fhould principally fix upon thefe charges in the apology, which involved perfonal confequences; and only touched upon the fubject of government, fo far as to eftablifh certain principles, on which to difcufs this important point. When Mr. O'Kelly has fully proved all the charges he has alledged againft the bifhop and conference, and beaten us quite out of this field, it will be time enough to proceed upon government.

My confcience does not accufe me of any intention or defign to mifrepreſent, and thereby to injure Mr. O'Kelly's character; nor do I believe that you would patronize me in fo doing.

In brotherly love,

I am, &c.

NICHOLAS SNETHEN.

Baltimore, April 25th, 1802.

AN

ANSWER, &c.

SOME persons appear surprised that one should undertake to answer a book, and not know the author, or have any personal knowledge of the circumstances in detail. The following suppositions, may help them to perceive the propriety of an instance of this kind: Suppose a book should be written upon a subject relative to persons or facts, and the author should conceal his name; and that some one should examine into the proofs of the relation, and finding that the account was incorrect, should publish a refutation upon the credibility of the evidences and arguments he had collected; would it be proper to reject the publication, or to invalidate it, because it might be written against a book, the author of which had concealed his name?

Many books that have been written upon controversal subjects, have either been anonymous, or the authors have been strangers to each other. Suppose that the true name and character of "Christicola" could not have been discovered; must the Apology have remained unanswered, and the things therein asserted passed for correct accounts? The discovery of the true author was no ways essential to the reply, and the mention of his proper, instead of his fictitious name was only incidental. The merits of a book and the true state of facts are not to be determined by a knowledge of the name, or character of a writer;

even good men may err. Again, ſuppoſe a reply had been publiſhed by Mr. Aſbury, or any intimate acquaintance of Mr. O'Kelly; the public muſt have judged of the arguments, and evidences uſed to refute the apology. Was not the compiler as capable of forming a judgment of them in manuſcript as in print? If Mr. Aſbury choſe to confide in me to ſelect, or abridge, a number of accounts and teſtimonies, it cannot diſcredit the reply.

Mr. Aſbury's character had been aſſaulted before, upon a ſimilar occaſion, and he found friends to ſtep forth in his defence. In the preſent caſe, he prepared an anſwer to Mr. O'Kelly; but his friends adviſed him to leave the buſineſs in the hands of his ſons in the goſpel. This is he, Mr. O'Kelly ſays in his preface, "Who always keeps behind the ſcreen." During thoſe unhappy diviſions which rent the boſom of the ſociety in Charleſton, Mr. Aſbury viſited it annually; and he has not ſpent leſs than one twelfth of his time in Virginia, ſince the diviſion by Mr. O'Kelly. The reſt of his time he has indeed been behind the ſcreen, that is, out of ſight of the ſocieties in Charleſton, and Virginia. But what has he been doing behind the ſcreen? How did he ſpend his time there? One might follow him behind the ſcreen to the banks of Kennebeck in the eaſt; to the borders of the lakes to the north; over the Alleghany and Cumberland mountains to the weſt; and over the Savannah river to the ſouth. Theſe are the ſcreens which have hidden Mr. Aſbury from his brethren, and from his enemies in Virginia. Mr. O'Kelly was never behind thoſe ſcreens; He knows not what has been done, is doing, or to be done there. But many of our preachers know, that the biſhop has more to do, and to ſuffer there, than in thoſe ſettlements where a man has a plentiful table every day to eat at, and a good bed every night, and a ceiled room to ſleep in. If Mr. O'Kelly would leave his be-

loved haunts through the mid-lands of North-Carolina and Virginia, and take one round behind theſe ſcreens; if he would travel faint and weary, over the rocks of the north and the hills of the weſt; if he ſhould have to encamp a few nights on the bare ground, cold and wet, at Rich-land creek, the Hazel-patch, and Cumberland river; if he ſhould be crouded in a hut with a parcel of hunters, and promiſcuous travellers; I think he would then have new ideas, and be able to expoſe methodiſt epiſcopacy in a much juſter light than he has yet done.

Mr. O'Kelly gives an account of the cauſes which influenced him to publiſh the apology; but they appear to me, if true, to be quite inſufficient for his juſtification. "Having my mind (ſays he) impreſſed with theſe letters, and many verbal and groundleſs reports" &c. A puniſhment ought to bear ſome proportion to an offence; and a vindication ſhould be anſwerable to an accuſation. When a man is injured by a private letter, and means to ſtand on the "defenſive" only, it is ſufficient for him to write another private letter; and ſo of verbal reports; but to print an anſwer to private letters, and verbal reports, under the pompous title of an Apology for proteſting againſt the government of the methodiſt epiſcopacy is much more than ſtanding on the "defenſive;" nay, it is an open attack upon the government and the biſhop. Hundreds and thouſands will eventually hear Mr. O'Kelly's charges againſt Mr. Aſbury and the general conference, who, if he had not publiſhed his apology, would have never known of any miſunderſtanding between him and them. Admitting that Mr. Aſbury did write in a private letter, "ſaying" "If he writes any thing about me, it ſhall be the worſt days work he ever did!" which is very doubtful, as Mr. O'Kelly had the information from a ſecond or third hand, not to mention his own incorrectneſs. If Mr. Aſbury "wrote to a correſpondent," he wrote

no doubt, to a confidant. A tale-bearer revealeth secrets. Ad. vi. 1, 2. I say that Mr. O'Kelly's information was correct, about the passage in a letter to a correspondent, *for* my part I do not think them "great swelling words," but the words of truth and soberness: I seriously think that the apology was the author's worst days work, and that it had been happy for him, and perhaps hundreds in Virginia. if he had never made it; but this is matter of opinion only, and must remain in a great measure secret until *that day*: then it shall be known how many have perished, for lack of knowledge, who would have heard the gospel of their salvation, had not their minds been prejudiced against its faithful preachers by Mr. O'Kelly's writings.

As for Reuben Ellis, if the expressions which are attributed to him in the preface are as incorrect as the character there given him, many who were intimately acquainted with him will give them to the winds from whence they came. "That violent episcopalian;" nay, this was not the character of Mr. Ellis, he never was a son of *violence*, but slow to speak, slow to wrath, a man of great sweetness and equanimity of temper, who seldom, if ever, carried any thing to extremes. It is true he was a faithful friend to the methodist episcopal church, and to this day his name is precious to hundreds of her members.

Vindication page 6. "He evades it entirely, and never answers that grand question, nor offers to explain or defend their episcopal government"—I really thought that I had not only attempted, but actually written many things both to explain, and defend the episcopal government against Mr. O'Kelly's misrepresentations, and attempts to destroy it. Ibid. "So small a contradiction is not worthy of debate: whoever made the proposal, the report in substance is true. I would just observe that 3 times 5 is 15, and 5 times 3 is the same"—I have a very imperfect

knowledge of ſubſtances, and of Mathematicks, if there be not a very material contradiction, and very worthy of debate, in the conſequence which may reſult from it—" So ſmall a contradiction" in ſome other inſtances will determine the whole " debate" between us. It never was pretended that every thing which is aſſerted in the apology was falſe. In regard to conferences, and ſome other things, as to the circumſtances of time and place, he may be right. Mr. O'Kelly had detailed the account of the Manikin town conference, but he had attributed a circumſtance to himſelf and his friends, which was actually done by Mr. Aſbury. I am inclined to hope that his memory failed him. The caſe was thus: On the morning of the day in which, he ſays, Mr. Aſbury preached his farewell ſermon, he (Mr. Aſbury) made the "propoſal" in the evening, Mr. Dickens having previouſly conceded the point, reduced to writing the propoſition, to obtain the conſent of the conference next morning.

Vin. page 7. " Here I deny the election of Dr. Coke and Francis Aſbury, by the ſuffrage of the American conference. Now for the proof I appeal to their own records"—But do thoſe records ſay they were not elected? If not, why appeal to them? The election of the biſhops is well conſiſtant with the minutes. The conference might agree to acknowledge Mr. Weſley, and yet elect Dr Coke and Mr. Aſbury: Mr. Weſley might ordain Dr. Coke, and direct him to ordain Mr. Aſbury, and yet they might be elected; there is no contradiction, in all this. Make the moſt of our " own records," and the " notorious fact;" and they only prove that the Biſhops had the appointment and approbation of " Dear Weſley." Vin. page 8. "Now let the impartial reader judge where truth lies and do me juſtice"—Nay, the impartial reader cannot judge right without hearing both ſides of the queſtion. But Mr. O'Kelly ſays, page 7. " He

could qualify he heard no talk of an election there" —Does he mean that he would take his oath upon the holy evangelists of Almighty God, that Francis Asbury was not elected by the suffrage of the conference, held in Baltimore in 1784? Oaths are solemn things! When Dr. Coke disclosed Mr. Wesley's intention that Mr. Asbury should be ordained, he refused to accept the ordination without the election of the preachers, for he knew, that it was not proper to attempt to serve the American connection without their consent, as they were to be constituted a separate body; not subordinate to the British connection. To obtain the election of the superintendants or Bishops was a special part of the design of calling that conference. Dr. Coke in his sermon at the ordination of Mr. Asbury, says expressly, in presence of the members of that conference—page 8, "We have every qualification for an episcopal Church, which Alexandria possessed for two hundred years. Our Bishops, or Superintendants, having been elected, or received by the sufferages of the whole body of our Ministers through the continent, assembled in General Conference." And in the Minutes of that Conference, page 11. it is said in a N. B. to question 26th. "No person shall be ordained a Superintendent, without the consent of a majority of the Conference." In addition to this read the following Testimony. Viz. "We, whose names are undersigned, do testify, that we were members of the Conference held in Baltimore in the year of our Lord 1784, and that the method of deciding all questions in said conference was by voting, and that Mr. Asbury was elected as is asserted in the Reply, page 9, by an unanimous vote."

Edward Dromgoole, Ira Ellis, William Watters, Le Roy Cole, John Hagerty.

Now impartial reader if Mr. O'Kelly has nothing

more to ſay in his own "vindication," you may judge where the truth lies and do "him juſtice."

Vin. page 10. "He undertakes to refute a charge againſt the Biſhop, when it has no appearance of a charge, only the circumſtance was mentioned to keep up the thread of my hiſtory"—It is a pity that the thread of a hiſtory cannot be kept up without miſtakes, and errors. But if Mr. O'Kelly did not deſign this as a charge, why does he not give up the caſe? It will perhaps appear in the ſequel very much like a charge both in the apology, and the vindication. The Apology ſays that Mr. Aſbury was oppoſed to a joint ſuperintendent; The Reply ſays he was *not*; And the vindication aſks, page 9. "What is the difference"? The difference is the ſame as it is between right and wrong, or, if the reader will allow the expreſſion, between truth and falſehood. Dr. Coke ſays that Mr. Aſbury acquieſced in the appointment, as did the Charleſton conference. Mr. Bruce ſays "Mr. Aſbury convinced him that he was not oppoſed to the appointment:" Mr. Whatcoat ſays Mr. Aſbury was not oppoſed to his being joint ſuperintendent with himſelf: ſee Reply page 3 & 10. But "Francis" it ſeems "ſaid but little"—Oh, that he had always kept ſuch a watch upon the door of his lips, while in the preſence of Mr. O'Kelly and men of his diſpoſition. Vin. page 10. "In the ninth verſe I make mention of the origin of the title Biſhop, at a diſtrict conference even in 1787—three times four and four times three is all the difference between the report and the reply"—If the reader can have patience he may try the queſtion by the rule of ſimple multiplication: Apol. Ver. 3. "Francis directed the preachers that whenever they write to him to title him Biſhop";—Reply page 11. "The conference adviſed, that every one ſhould uſe his own choice, and that thoſe who doubted the propriety of Reverend, might give the ſimple name with the official charac-

ter, as Biſhop, Elder, or Deacon." Are theſe accounts as near alike as twelve and twelve? Apol. ibid. "They did ſo: and this was the beginning of our ſpurious epiſcopacy." And why not of our "ſpurious" elderſhip? Reply ibid. "To attempt to give an account of the beginning of methodiſt epiſcopacy, which is ſo well known, in order to ſhow the fallacy of Mr. O'Kelly's account, would be to trifle with common ſenſe, and to ſink the reply into contempt." —Vin. page 11. "We both agree that the title biſhop, was born at the ſaid diſtrict conference, and on account of its low and untimely birth I deem it ſpurious epiſcopacy." Judicious reader, if you can deign to caſt an eye over the apology and the reply, tell me if you can ſee any agreement between Mr. O'Kelly and myſelf about this matter.

Vin. page 11. "This epiſcopacy is the diſputed point, and the proctor paſſeth by the mountain without notice!" Looking over the apology I was a little ſtartled at firſt view, with an object of ſome apparent magnitude, but on examining it more attentively I found it was a little heap of Mr. O'Kelly's abſurdities, around which he had raiſed the miſt of error, and the fog of deception, in order to magnify it into a mountain. If the origin of methodiſt epiſcopacy muſt be dated from the firſt mention of the name biſhop, as a character of the ſuperintendents, it muſt be dated from the conference of 1784. See Dr. Cokes ſermon upon Mr. Aſbury's ordination, page 8. "Our *biſhops* or *ſuperintendents* have been elected by our miniſters aſſembled in general conference." The American preachers in 1784, by Mr. Weſley's advice and conſent, agreed by a majority of votes, to form themſelves into a ſeparate body, to be called the methodiſt epiſcopal church in America; Francis Aſbury who had acted for a number of years under Mr. Weſley, as a general aſſiſtant, was elected "*by an unanimous vote*," to be one of the *biſhops*, or *ſuperintendents* over the ſaid Church.

At the same conference, one Mr. James O'Kelly, since famous as the author of a division in this church, and of a book he calls an apology, was ordained an elder to administer the sacraments in the said episcopal church. I hope he does not think I wish to "evade" these facts; if I had any design in not recurring to them in the reply, except their being intimately known; it was, that I might not seem to expose the ingratitude and inconsistency of Mr. O'Kelly in traducing his fathers in religion and the ministry; and yet continuing to act as an elder, by virtue of the ordination he obtained, by the laying on of the hands of the bishops of the methodist episcopal church, which he calls a "spurious episcopacy."—See the minutes, Q. 3. "As the ecclesiastical as well as civil affairs of these United States have passed through a very considerable change by the revolution, what plan of church government shall we hereafter pursue? A. "We will form ourselves into an episcopal church under the direction of superintendants (otherwise bishops) elders, deacons, and helpers, according to the form of ordination annexed to our liturgy, and the form of discipline set forth in these minutes." I would ask Mr. O'Kelly, What new powers Mr. Asbury or the superintendant obtained by being called bishop? What alteration followed "the origin of" what he calls "spurious episcopacy" in the year of our Lord 1787? Did not every thing remain as it had done from the year 1784, in all the connection? See minutes, page 11 Quest. 26. What is the office of a *superintendant*? Ans. To ordain *superintendants*, *elders*, and *deacons*, to preside as a moderator in our conferences; to fix the appointments of the preachers for the several circuits: and in the intervals of the conference, to change, receive, or suspend preachers as necessity may require; and to receive appeals from the preachers and people, and decide them.—Vin. page 10. "But I well remember his

introduction to the propoſal of that title. viz. I diſlike the long *latin* name ſuperintendant"—Perhaps I may ſhow hereafter my reaſons for doubting Mr. O'Kelly's word in this inſtance; but ſuppoſing that he did diſlike a "long *latin* name" was that a crime? A man I hope is not to be blamed for preferring a ſhort ſcriptural Engliſh word, to a long latin one, not uſed in ſcripture. It appears from Dr. Coke's ſermon that he uſed both the terms, but preferred the latin one, and the conference afterwards adviſed that any preacher ſhould take his choice. In regard to the word biſhop in our Engliſh bibles, if I recollect right, Dr. Watts in his logic, conjectures, that it is a ſaxon corruption of the greek word, for which it ſtands in the tranſlation, formed by omitting the vowel E, and changing P into B, a common caſe in the old language: in ſaxon, perhaps, pronounced biſcop, by abbreviating the greek termination, hence ſoftening the word into modern Engliſh, *biſhop*, overſeer, or ſuperintendant. Now ſuppoſe that when Mr. O'Kelly became the head of a party, he had called himſelf by the greek name preſbyter, or by the latin name ſenator, and after two years diſliking the latin or greek name, ſhould have propoſed to his fraternity to call him by the Engliſh word *elder*, would it be proper to call ſuch an alteration, in a word or name, the beginning of his "ſpurious eccleſiaſtical republicaniſm?"

Vin. page 11. "We come now to the place of Mr. Weſley's expulſion from the methodiſt epiſcopal connection. In the reply (page 15) the proctor acknowledges this dreadful act"—I do not find any thing like an acknowledgement of "this dreadful act" in the reply. How could Mr. O'Kelly ſay ſo? I gave ſeveral hints in the reply, which I hoped would have induced Mr. O'Kelly not to renew this ſubject; but inſtead of being gratified, I find he has taken up about four pages of the vindication on this

ſubject. Vin. page 14. "The whole proceſs of the caſe (i. e. that is Weſley's expulſion)"—Nay, "Weſley's expulſion" was not "carried through the conference" nor any where elſe. Mr. Weſley was never expelled from the methodiſt epiſcopal church. The propoſal which was made by Mr. Aſbury and agreed to by the Manikin town conference, and the proceſs, and the termination of the plan of the Fluvanna conference, was tranſmitted by Mr. Aſbury to Mr. Weſley, when the war ended, in the acknowledgement of American independance. Dr. Coke was diſpatched to America with authority to eſtabliſh an independance, on the hierarchy of the church of England, by ordaining the American preachers, &c. Mr. Aſbury would accept of no powers from the Dr. without the conſent and choice of the preachers, who were called to meet in conference. Among the rules offered by the Dr. one was deſigned to preſerve the future union between the Britiſh and American methodiſts: Mr. Aſbury objected to it, in the form it was propoſed, as unreaſonable and highly improper: He thought that as the ſocieties in America had continued for a number of years without any ſuch obligation, to require it immediately after the peace, would be attended with unhappy political conſequences, as it was a well known circumſtance, that Mr. Weſley had written in favour of the Britiſh miniſtry; but the Dr. contended for it, and Mr. Aſbury agreed to ſubmit, if it met with the approbation of the preachers. The obligation being laid before the conference, met with oppoſition; but, it paſſed in the form in which it was printed in the minutes: See page 2. Queſt. 2. What can be done in order to preſerve the future union of the methodiſts? Anſ. During the life of the Rev. Mr. Weſley, we acknowledge ourſelves his ſons in the goſpel, ready in matters belonging to church government to obey his commands. And we do engage after his death to do every thing that we

judge consistent with the cause of religion in America, and the political interests of these States, to preserve and promote our union with the Methodists in Europe." The first and only effect of this obligation was the nomination of Richard Whatcoat for a superintendant. Mr. Wesley could not *positively* appoint him; for notwithstanding the acknowledgement, the same conference made a rule: see min. page 11. that "No person shall be ordained a *superintendant* without the consent of a majority of the conference." Mr. Asbury consented to receive Mr. Whatcoat, as did the Charleston conference. At Rough creek the appointment first met with opposition, and according to Mr. O'Kelly and Dr. Coke, they were the principal parties in the dispute. The Dr. no doubt contended for the rule to obey Mr. Wesley. Now what arguments could Mr. O'Kelly make use of but such us would go directly to renounce Mr. Wesley's authority? He tells us indeed that he argued against the nomination from a consideration that two heads would make two bodies: an argument altogether worthy of Mr. O'Kelly. A correct mind would have said *three*, and then fact could be opposed to show the fallacy of the proposition. Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury did not make two bodies. The Baltimore conference which was that year the largest and most respectable in the connection, being specially called, and consisting of all the preachers who chose to attend, was much more spirited, and resolute in their opposition. *Dr. Coke sat as president* and made the proposal of Richard Whatcoat according to Mr. Wesley's orders. It was asked if they were called to ratify the appointment implicitly, or to vote discretionally, and according to their own judgments. This involved a very serious question. Dr. Coke insisted upon the minute to obey Mr. Wesley. On the other hand it was asserted, that the methodist societies had been declared a

ſeparate body, that the conference had eſtabliſhed a rule for voting, and precluded from the ſuperintendency any perſon who ſhould not have a majority of votes for that important office; and that being circumſtanced as they were, it would be attended with leſs evil to renounce the minutes by which they had agreed to obey Mr. Weſley, than to give up the right of voting; as one or the other muſt follow by conſequence. The vote was at length taken; not whether Mr. Weſley ſhould be expelled from the methodiſt epiſcopal church, but whether the conference ought not to reject the agreement to obey Mr. Weſley in *all* matters belonging to church government? The queſtion was carried, and the conference thus declared that they would not implicitly obey Mr. Weſley or any other man; the minute was rejected, and as the conference ſaw no want of a third ſuperintendent at the time, they refuſed to elect one. Had Mr. Weſley came to America, the connection would have received him with open arms, and I ſuppoſe all the preachers, except one who has ſuch an antipathy againſt "Engliſhmen, human heads," &c. would have rejoiced in the opportunity of acknowledging themſelves, "dear Weſley's" ſons in the goſpel. How many conferences does Mr. O'Kelly ſuppoſe there were in 1787? If there was treachery in not carrying the caſe through all the conferences, why not lay the blame upon Dr. Coke? "he being ſenior." Surely, if the Dr. could over-rule and have a general conference appointed at the requeſt of Mr. O'Kelly and his friends, he could over-rule and prevent Mr. Weſley from being expelled in the way that the apology and vindication ſay he was? But "Dr. Coke" and "Mr. Weſley" "blamed" Mr. Aſbury, not becauſe "He had taken a few choſen "men, and in a clandeſtine manner expelled John "whoſe ſurname was Weſley, from the methodiſt epiſ-"copal church." Oh no, they never thought him

guilty of ſuch conduct. Dr. Coke blamed Mr. Aſbury for the time being in the hurry, becauſe he did not ſtir up a hornets-neſt. He thought that Mr. Aſbury ought to have done more than conſent to receive Mr. Whatcoat, that he could have exerted his influence with the preachers to let the printed obligation remain.

Mr. Aſbury was the only Engliſh preacher that adopted the American country, and was determined to ſtand or fall with the cauſe of independence; all the reſt returned, and one at leaſt, was not very well affected toward him: and Mr. Aſbury's intentions were queſtioned, and Mr. Weſley was adviſed to keep a watchful eye over the great water. When the news went to England that the American preachers had refuſed to elect Mr. Whatcoat, one of the preachers who had been upon the continent, was not backward in declaring that he was a true prophet, and that "Frank Aſbury," ſo he called him, was at the bottom of the whole buſineſs. Dr. Coke upon his return to Europe made matters more plain; and Mr. Weſley wrote to Mr. Aſbury, blaming him for not riſing up and declaring, that unleſs the preachers would continue to acknowledge the printed obligation he would leave the continent.

Now, if I might be permitted to ſhow my opinion, I ſhould blame Mr. Aſbury and the conference for ever conſenting to obey Mr. Weſley, in any matter reſpecting church government, contrary to their own judgment, and ſhould applaud them for renouncing the obligation, and indeed it appears to me that this very circumſtance will bear very hard upon Mr. O'Kelly's ſincerity. If he is really ſuch an enemy to Britiſh influence, as he pretends to be, why does he endeavour to fix ſo much blame upon the rejection of Mr. Weſley's unlimited authority over the methodiſt connection in America? As for the talk in the vindication about the ideal expulſion, ſome perſons for

ought I know, may think it witty, and pretty, but unhappily it wants foundation; it is like building caſtles, and houſes, and fields in the air. There are ſome apparent miſtakes upon this ſubject, which need rectifying.

Vin. page 12. "He exerts himſelf as a city ſtormed, we tremble for his reputation"—From the thirty ſixth page of the vindication, where Mr. O'Kelly quotes ſome words connected with theſe, it appears that he thinks we epiſcopal preachers, trembled for Mr. Aſbury's reputation. No, we never heſitated; we were always ſatisfied that the accuſation was falſe and groundleſs.

Vin. page 16. "The reader may obſerve the charge is not denied"—What, the charge about the ordination of novices "not denied!" Reply page 18. "The reader may be aſſured that this information is *falſe*; page 19. "Mr. O'Kelly will therefore have to bear the cenſure of this miſrepreſentation for the preſent"—Now, I really thought this amounted to a denial—Vin. page 16. "As for the date of the places, and number, &c. it is an *impertinent* evaſion"—No, It was not an evaſion, but intended to teach Mr. O'Kelly that if he wiſhed to be credited he muſt be a little more correct and definite—Vin. page 16. "Now concerning their ordination, I will ſay what I know and can prove. The biſhop nominates." He ſhould have ſaid, *used to nominate*, and then, why it *used* to be ſo. Mr. Weſley adviſed that as few elders ſhould be ordained as would barely ſuffice to adminiſter the ordinances. No rule being fixed by which they ſhould be ſelected, and no particular number determined: therefore Mr. Aſbury uſed to nominate, and the conference elected. But when a fixed time of probation was eſtabliſhed, every preacher at the expiration of the time, became eligible to an election: and thus it is to this day without nomination.

Vin. page 16. "Then follows on the *nugatory* election"— But would it be nugatory? Mr. O'Kelly's pen is like the touch of some noxious animal, it defiles and disfigures every subject with which it comes in contact. The reply says, The bishop holds no negative; it asks where the authority for the negative is written; and whose election he ever negatived. Mr. O'Kelly does not deign to answer. But suppose the Bishop can negative an election, how does that prove that he can "ordain" without the election of the conference and the aid of the elders."

Vin. page 18. "I must stop and relieve my *injured character*." Impossible! Mr. O'Kelly's character *as an author* is gone beyond relief. Vin. page 19. "There is not one word of truth, he says, in my complaint"—I never said so, I never denied but that many words and even sentences may be true. Neither do I deny that "Francis said, henceforth ye are all out of the union"—But I do deny, even admitting he did say so, that it was an expulsion from the methodist connection, or that Mr. Asbury meant any such thing—"Ye are all out of the union"—Now if they were expelled, it could not be by those words as they are only descriptive of a fact. He does not say I now expel you all; but from the time they all spoke out of one mouth, they were out of the union. Of what? of the council to be sure; how could they be in the union of the council, when they had rejected it—Vin. "What things did he say? why does he hide those things from the reader?" I could not tell correctly what he said. It was sufficient for a reply to say that if Mr. Asbury *ever* spoke unadvisedly with his lips he did not justify himself; the reply does not justify him, nor does the compiler of it justify him in so doing. It is a little extraordinary that Mr. O'Kelly's and Mr. Haggard's memories should be so correct in recollecting Mr. Asbury's words, when they wish to take an advantage

of them; and yet they are incapable of remembering a paſſage in the reply long enough to tranſcribe it correctly. "Not one word to be ſubſtantiated," ſays Mr. Haggard; aye fifty, an hundred of them if he pleaſes. But Mr. Haggard ſays, He felt himſelf as an excommunicate from the moment, &c. Is it poſſible! but ſuppoſing he did, it only proves that he miſunderſtood the biſhop.

As Mr. O'Keily ſtill inſiſts upon the truth of the apology, reſpecting his expulſion, and I ſtill deny it, notwithſtanding all that he has ſaid in the vindication, I now requeſt, when he writes again, that he will tell us where he ſpent his time during his exclusion; what preſiding elder attended the quarterly meetings; and likewiſe the time and place of his readmiſſion into the connection of the methodiſt epiſcopal church. If he can give a correct well-ſubſtantiated account of thoſe things, and better proof cannot be oppoſed, it muſt paſs for evidence. I will therefore reſerve the teſtimony upon this ſubject, until he produces this evidence.

Vin. page 20. "What could be the meaning of my circular letter." I cannot tell, but I ſuppoſe that Mr. O'Kelly can tell, the meaning of his letter dated after the Peterſburg conference, in which he ſigns himſelf Mr. Aſbury's "*reconciled brother.*"

Vin. page 22. "With regard to a college which was in contemplation, between Meſſrs. Aſbury and Davies, the Apology (in ſubſtance) is correct: the Reply confirms it, and Mr. Early proves the fact"—Juſt the reverſe. Apol. page 28—29. "Did not Francis mock us, when he ſent petitions through all the provinces, urging every member, male and female, to ſend him relief. He told his preachers that if they did not exert themſelves in," ſtiring up the people" that likely they would hear of his being in jail. Then left us and went ſtraitway to a certain Mr. Davies and agreed to raiſe (if the Methodiſts can

tell true) £. 3000 to assist the said Davies in erecting a new college." Reply page 21—22, "Mr. Asbury was a stranger to Mr. Davies; the first knowledge he had of him was by letter, in which Mr. Davies signified that he would appropriate some hundreds of acres of land for the purpose of building and supporting a college." Mr. Early says "That respecting the charge,—To my certain knowledge it was not so—Mr. Asbury agreed to accept the land, upon condition that a deed should be given to trustees then nominated. Now if I understand right the "substance" of the Apology is an insinuation that Mr. Asbury was acting the hypocrite, in order to get money: and the substance of the Reply and Mr. Early's testimony is, to show the publick that Mr. Asbury did nothing more respecting the offer of Mr. Davies than engage to carry a deed to the trustees, if Mr. Davies choose to give them one. But it seems the reply brings to Mr. O'Kelly's mind Shakespears comedy of "Much ado about nothing." Now the vindication reminds me of Proverbs chap. 26, vers. 18—19. Query. Did Mr. O'Kelly and Mr. Haggard ever read the Reply?

Vin. page 24. "The next subject worthy of attention is the general Conference for the year 1792" —When the views of a subject are various, it is not strange that men should err; especially when they are influenced by their different interests, and the different ends they have to answer.

Mr. Wesley had recommended the Episcopal form of church government, which admits of grades of office. The minds of the preachers and societies in America were not prepared to endure many changes; and indeed Mr. Asbury, himself, had so much partiality for old usages, and so little foresight of the difficulties of the work, which lay before him, that he was not inclined to any such attempt. However, the practice of deciding all questions in conference

by a majority of votes was introduced—this was an important regulation in the history of Methodism in America: the happy effects of it were soon felt; the preachers now exercised their free suffrage in the government of the Church, they were stimulated to inform their minds upon all questions that came before them; they were led to a reciprocal communication of their sentiments in open conference, and thereby light and information were diffused among them; they exercised their free and independent judgment in voting: and consequently their decisions were probably founded upon better principles, and more to the satisfaction and unity of the body collectively. Orderly men who are friends to the rights of a free suffrage, and who are not obstinately self-willed, will cheerfully yield to the decisions of a majority.

The conference having sanctioned the episcopal mode of government, chosen the superintendents, and made a few general rules in addition to those parts of the general minutes, which they adopted, they dissolved their sitting without making any rule for a succeeding meeting of the like nature. The work soon spread beyond the expectation of the most sanguine. The societies became large and numerous; and a number of active and zealous young men were found among them, who soon displayed gifts and graces adequate for the work of the ministry. Mr. Asbury being looked up to on all occasions, was overburdened with care and labour. A constitution naturally tender, began to sink beneath the weight of constant fatigue and application, and to heighten his difficulties, he discovered the appearance of some of the first principles of a schism, which if carried into effect, must divide the connection and destroy the travelling plan.

The work was very prosperous in most of the counties south of James's river; and among the

preachers who became conspicuous in that revival, perhaps none attracted more general attention than Mr. James O'Kelly. Many circumstances contributed to favour his popularity: Indulged by the superintendent, his station was more permanent than any other preacher's; forward on all occasions to assert his own consequence; naturally sanguine in his temper, and all glowing with zeal for the "unparalleled blessed methodism," he was as a chief among the young preachers; nor had he less influence over the people, whose passions were generally susceptible and exquisite.

It was among this people that Mr. O'Kelly laboured, first as a circuit preacher, and afterwards as a presiding elder. The societies in general were in their first love, and so much engaged in devotion as to have but little inclination for criticism. As there were but few elders, the presiding elder was followed every where by crouds of hearers. In many places the ordinances could not be administered for the want of elders. Mr. Asbury could not help seeing that something must be done; but he thought to call the preachers from the extremities of the connection to a general conference, would have been attended with almost insuperable difficulties. Many of the societies would have been left in their infant state for weeks or months, without a preacher: the number of local preachers then being very small.

In the hurry of incessant and complicated labour and care, Mr. Asbury fixed upon the plan, and recommended the *council*. It met accordingly, and having proceeded to business, Mr. O'Kelly, who was one of the council, submitted a manuscript to obtain consent to have it published; but it was disapproved, and he felt sensibly on this occasion, and being displeased he became a violent opposer of the council.

Things soon began to wear a different aspect, and a discerning mind than Mr. Asbury's, might have

ſeen that matters were drawing to a criſis. Mr. O'Kelly ſtill maintained in a great meaſure his popularity in his diſtrict; but frequently incidents tranſpired, which ſerved to develope hidden principles and fix the great outlines of his character. He adminiſtered diſcipline with an high hand, in almoſt every part of his diſtrict; complaints were murmured of his precipitate and violent excommunications. Mr. Aſbury's borders were continually extending in every direction; the council buſineſs was embarraſſed; letters began to be circulated, and public converſations were frequent about the ſpirit of the times. So many circumſtances combined, that it was no longer a matter of doubt what part Mr. O'Kelly meant to act. It was eaſy to be ſeen that he never meant to quit Virginia. No alternative would be accepted but a general conference, under the auſpices of Dr. Coke. Inflammatory letters were diſpatched in various directions. However, when the general conference met, every queſtion that came before them was determined by a majority. One fair trial here fixed the ſtrength of parties. It was ſo in this inſtance; a motion was made for an appeal, which was loſt by a great majority. Mr. O'Kelly was now convinced that he had not the influence which he expected in the general conference. He found that he could not carry his meaſures; the mortification and diſappointment was too great for one ſo unaccuſtomed to contradiction: he therefore refuſed a ſubmiſſion to the deciſſion of the conference, and withdrew himſelf from the "union." Hence it appears that nothing would ſatisfy him, excepting the conference would be ruled and governed by him. He now fell out with the conference, as he had done before with the council. Now from this view of the ſubject, one may obtain a pretty correct notion of the merits of the tranſactions of Mr. O'Kelly, reſ-

pecting the biſhop, the council, the general conference, &c.

We have already ſeen that ſufficient proviſion was not made for the government of a growing body. The great defect ſeems to have been in putting too much duty upon the ſuperintendents. The ſtrongeſt governments are thoſe in which power is moſt properly divided; and placed in the hands of thoſe who are the beſt qualified to adminiſter it. Mr. Aſbury ſeems to have been placed in the ſituation of a father over a number of men; ſome of whom felt none of the relative ties of a ſon; and were even aſpiring at an independence of the authority of the biſhop, which he held by the ſuffrage of the conference.

No man could ſee, no man could feel the difficulties under which the connection laboured, ſo well as Mr. Aſbury: for no man could take the ſame view of it, and hear the ſame complaints. To his grief he heard the loudeſt complaints from Mr. O'Kelly's diſtrict. The plan of the council which was adopted to ſave the connection from threatening danger, appeared defective, and did not remedy the exiſting evils; at moſt, it only gave temporary relief. Nothing but a general conference could give ſatisfaction. Had Mr. O'Kelly in this, aimed at uniting the preachers and preſerving the connection, he had done a good work.

When Mr. O'Kelly inſiſted upon a general conference, he inſiſted upon a good thing; but in an improper ſpirit, and for wrong ends, as the ſequel plainly proved. Mr. Aſbury ſought the welfare of the travelling connection; and wiſhed to do ſomething, if poſſible, to unite the preachers that they might ſtand upon rules and not upon the paſſions of men. Mr. O'Kelly ſought his own will and glory, and wanted to ſpend his life ſomewhere not far from the banks of Roan-oak: otherwiſe where his ſelf-will or popularity might direct him.

The general conference happily hit upon the means and the end both. The connection then first felt its real strength, and to their praise they used it with great wisdom, firmness, and moderation. They determined that no elder should preside in any one district, for more than four years successively; and thereby prevented any future attempt to secure a perpetual presidency in a favourite district. The general conference was convinced, by painful experience, that the bishops and annual conferences were not able to provide against the evils in which the connection might be involved: therefore a succeeding conference was appointed to meet at the expiration of four years. In the mean time Mr. O'Kelly exerted his unremitted efforts to divide the classes, and disaffect the preachers in his old district; nevertheless, to his great mortification, the bonds of union grew stronger: he could not succeed agreeably to his wishes. This was owing partly to two causes—1. During the last years of his presidency he had ruled as with a rod of iron; his oppressive hand was severely felt; and the people soon saw the difference between his administration, and that of his successor. 2. When Mr. O'Kelly began to form societies, he courted the favour of those over whom he had lorded it; and even admitted into his connection, backsliders, whom he himself had excluded from the methodist church.

These are facts too glaring to be denied. Many who had been well affected to the man, were forced to see those inconsistencies, and were astonished, and convinced that his motives were not pure.

Any one who reads Mr. O'Kelly's account of methodism might conclude, without better information, that the "old" methodists were a people destitute of all written rules, and that through the influence of Mr Asbury, the present methodists are embarrassed and fettered with new rules calculated to destroy their liberty: which conclusion would be

erroneous. The fact is, those alterations which have taken place, have tended directly to give greater privileges to the local preachers and private members. The excellencies of old methodism, which Mr. O'Kelly endeavoured to destroy, has been preserved by the general conference: which we hope will be a body of sufficient influence to continue the union.

Vin. page 29. "That I accepted the £. 40 salary is an untruth, to which the eternal Judge is witness!"—But he did receive the £. 10 he himself being witness. Now the Reply says it was not a present, and Mr. Daniel Southall says he paid the money as Mr. O'Kelly's request as part of his quarterage. Was it generous in Mr. O'Kelly to *receive* a present, and then to attempt to disgrace his benefactor? Ought not Mr. Asbury to be exonerated from the insinuation of giving hush money? ibid. "I verily believe I was deficient in my quarterage an hundred pounds." How comes this? Mr. O'Kelly so deficient who had travelled in so rich and populous and plentiful a country! And yet the bishop, and "his agents" such monied men, as it is some where hinted! If Mr. O'Kelly gave account of all his *gifts* and shared quarterage with the rest of his brethren, I am well satisfied he never made money by preaching among the methodists; and I am equally well satisfied that he made as much as the bishop or any other preacher. Ibid. "I spent the *prime* of my days in labouring for the salvation of an *unthankful* people" &c. Not "unthankful" to him, but he *ungrateful* to them. Followed by a weeping people, who had spared no pains, no labour to make him happy, nevertheless this unfortunate man tore himself away from the fondest embrace: and even to this day, notwithstanding he has made so many attempts with unhallowed hands to break down the hedges of the "vineyard" he once cultivated, and to spoil the tender

grapes with the vines, the hearts of the "people" bleed in pity for him.

Vin. page 30. "I call upon the methodiſt connection for any perſon of character among them to make any thing againſt their old friend, *ſcandalous mean* or *wicked*." Some of his beſt friends always ſaw in him a lamentable degree of ſelf-will, even in his holieſt days. Alas! what will not this ſelf-will do, if it is not kept under and ſubdued by grace! The methodiſt connection, can make many things appear againſt their "old friend," which have ſprung from this latent principle. Mr. O'Kelly would have his way by ſome means or other. Like the ſon of Nemſki he always drove furiouſly; his overdoing has ruined himſelf; and had well nigh ruined his friends. He carries every thing to extremes; whether liberty or ſlavery, epiſcopacy or republicaniſm, a "button" or a "pipe"—The methodiſts *can* make many things appear againſt their "old friend," but they have no need to do it. Mr. O'Kelly himſelf has made it appear that he builds the things he once deſtroyed; and deſtroys the things he once built. It appears that he has blamed Mr. Aſbury and the methodiſt diſcipline about thoſe very things which he himſelf did, of his own will, contrary to Mr. Aſbury's mind and the true ſpirit of the diſcipline. Now, whether ſuch conduct is "*ſcandalous*" or praiſe worthy, "*mean*" or honorable, "*wicked*" or righteous, may be left with our readers to determine. The amazing contraſt of Mr. O'Kelly's conduct, and not, as he ſays, Mr. Aſbury's "frowns" and "neglects" and "*feigned embraces*," has diſaffected his old friends. An inconſiſtant man, cannot retain the confidence of the public. Some who were well affected toward him, became diſguſted with his extravagancies; they were aſhamed of a cauſe ſo illy managed; and were glad to embrace the firſt oppor-

tunity to dissolve a relation which eventually must disgrace them.

Vin. page 30. "Now with regard to my faith"—With regard to his faith, I had the best testimony it was Unitarian; nor does he contradict it. To inform our preachers and societies and put them upon their guard lest they might imbibe his faith unawares, was all that was intended.

Vin. page 32. "Reader the reply is a vindication of my fact"—His is not a fact, but a mistake. The apology says, "No book or pamphlet dares be printed without the consent of the bishop"—The reply says, quoting the discipline, "Without the consent of the conference *or* of one of the bishops." But it seems Mr. O'Kelly does not, with all his grammar, understand the meaning of this little word OR. The meaning is, either the *one* or the *other*; so that a preacher may publish without "the consent of the bishop," if he has the consent of the conference. It may not be improper, to give an example of the changes and alterations in the discipline so much complained of.

In Mr. Wesley's time, all the books that were circulated among the societies were his own works, or such as were recommended by him. The American conference was of the opinion that it was proper to furnish the connection with religious books; and to prevent immature publications and erroneous doctrines, from being circulated, some check was really necessary. At first this business was committed wholly to the bishops; then to the bishops and conference; afterwards to either the bishops or conference, as quoted above: and the last general conference put the business in the hands of the yearly conferences, and a book committee to be appointed by the Philadelphia conference. If we believe Mr. O'Kelly, he has fallen a martyr in defence of "old methodism;" yet he is always railing against it. Hark! "gentle reader,"

if Mr. Asbury had consented that Mr. O'Kelly should have published and vended his crude indigested stuff through the connection, we should never have heard about the "attack on civil as well as religious liberty."

Vin. page 33. "I repeat it, the sufficiency of the *scriptural* government is flatly denied!"—When will Mr. O'Kelly cease to misrepresent the reply? If I had "flatly" denied the sufficiency of scripture government, he might have given my words verbatim, for the satisfaction of his readers, instead of his own reitirated ipsi dixit—The reply says, "It is in vain to argue against human heads, and human institutions, and to recommend the bible only, as a standard to remedy the evil." What *evil?* Why the *evil* which would result to the body, "if every one should think and act independant of his brother, without any regard to constitutional connection; as they all have a right to do in their private capacity." And the reason assigned in the reply is, "because every man has an equal right to explain the bible for himself; and without explanation (or application) it is a mere dead letter, that cannot be brought into effect"—A case is then supposed, to show that the bible will not make all men think and act alike, respecting the modes and process of administering discipline; and that if each one will still continue to think and act as he has a right to do, in his private capacity, the body must be divided, and consequently destroyed. In this manner I attempted to prove the proposition, viz. That no community could possibly exist if men would not voluntarily renounce certain lesser privileges, in order to secure the enjoyment of greater.

Vin. page 34. "He thinks that if the scriptures had been designed for our government, &c."—My words are, "Had the Holy Ghost have designed the scriptures for a system of discipline, and government in the church, without the agency of human wisdom

and human prudence, one would have inclined humbly to conjecture that he would have given it eyes and ears and a voice, that it might see and hear and determine all complaints, &c." —What objection can any man have to human reason, or human prudence, in forming discipline agreeable to their understanding of scripture? Did the Holy Spirit design Mr. O'Kelly, as an agent to govern the church? Did he design the civil sword as an agent to govern the church? I do not think, though they have both attempted it, that either of them are agents so fit as human reason or human prudence—Why should the church be governed by the agency of folly and madness, in preference to reason or prudence? But it seems Mr. O'Kelly is "wounded at this language!" He never met with such an open denial of the sufficiency of the divine word by ministers before." He must therefore have no agent at all to see, and hear, and determine, all complaints and difficulties in the church. Now if the divine word is so competent to govern the church without any agent, why not to preach itself likewise? Is it not an equal denial of the sufficiency of the divine word, for men to attempt to explain it, in order to preach it? or does the divine word require men to do these things without reason or prudence? I would ask Mr. O'Kelly, whether his rules were formed without reason or prudence? Whether his societies are governed without reason or prudence? Or whether they have no reason or prudence in their government, rules or regulations? Does he take "the divine word" for his exclusive rule in society regulations and government, without any reasonable or prudent explanation? Ah! there is the rub—his reason, and his prudence, must not be called into question, any more than "the divine word"—He must have his own comment on "the divine word," and it must be a sufficiency to govern according to his explanation; whether it be agreeable to reason and prudence or

not! but every other man's reaſon and prudence; that differs from him, ſtands for nothing—*Thus he is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason.*

Vin. page 34. "I could wiſh he had told us how all thoſe *denominations* came into the chriſtian world"—How could I do this? Upon his plan, I muſt have lived when they did; been acquainted with them; and preſent at their conferences, &c.—However, his own denomination has come into the world, in my time; and it is pretty well known how they came. They have called themſelves republican methodiſts. Can Mr. O'Kelly tell the chapter and verſe of ſcripture by which he was governed, or from which they took this name? This denomination has had the difficulties to contend with, which I have ſuppoſed in the reply: if I am rightly informed, Mr. O'Kelly laid hands ſuddenly upon a certain perſon, whoſe conduct was ſo exceptionable, that he afterward called him to an account, and cited him to appear and anſwer to charges, &c. The O'Kelly-made elder, in return gave him to underſtand, that he was paſtor of ſuch a church, and would not be amenable to any other, except his own flock—both parties thought, and acted, and *spake*, as they had a right to do, on Mr. O'Kelly's plan, independent of conſtitutional connection. The conſequence was diſgraceful to Mr. O'Kelly. Perhaps, if he had uſed a little human reaſon, or human prudence, he might have ſaved himſelf from public contempt.

It appears I am indebted to Mr. O'Kelly two texts of ſcripture: he may take Prov. xxvi. 7, and Rom. xvi. 17, 18. I hope the reader will ſay I have paid him juſtly.

This may not be an improper place to notice once more the offenſive paſſage in the addreſs: Since I wrote the Reply, I have obtained what I believe to be a pretty correct account of that publication. Mr.

O'Kelly had written a letter, in which he had somehow asserted, that he was averse to all *regular* governments in church and state, as unfriendly to liberty. This letter was known to the secretary, who drafted the address; and the sentiment was confirmed by some persons who had heard him use similar expressions in conversation. It was believed that the government of the United States was regular; and the general conference endeavoured to be regular in the government of the methodist church. From the best information I have obtained, the conference had not the most distant idea of Mr. O'Kelly's being opposed to republicanism, any more than to any other regular form of government. Observe, I simply relate the fact, to the best of my information.

Vin. page 38. "Lord, what a sin, shame and pity! I am compelled to write after this manner!"—Would it not have been more proper if he had said impelled? I can see nothing in the Reply that compelled him to write nonsense, to call it no worse. My words in the preface, are, "Very soon after the Apology made its appearance, Mr. Asbury began to collect materials for a reply; but finding his character established, by the verbal refutation of Mr. O'Kelly's insidious reflections, he hesitated about publishing," &c.—Why should I mention the names of those in the preface, who testified *verbally* against his reflections? The members of the conference, in which Mr. Asbury was elected, testified verbally against that part of the Apology which denied it. The members of the conference, in which the printed obligation to obey Mr. Wesley was renounced, could testify that the accusation against Mr. Asbury for expelling Mr. Wesley was false. The members of the Petersburg conference, and all the societies in the district, could testify verbally, that Mr. O'Kelly was not expelled by Mr. Asbury in 1789. The

members of the conference in 1792, could teſtify that he had no juſt cauſe to leave that aſſembly in the manner he did, &c. If there is any "ſin, ſhame, and pity," in Mr. O'Kelly's "manner" of writing, it lieth at his own door: See the following letter, and then judge how much credit is due to his other four teſtimonies.

Fairfax, March 30th, 1802.

Dear Brother,

MY friend *Somers* inſiſts upon my giving you a true ſtatement of what Mr. O'Kelly is pleaſed to make uſe of our names about. (ſee Vin. p. 37) I do deny that ever I told any one that Mr. O'Kelly aſſerted a falſehood, in ſaying that Mr. Aſbury was at the Manikin-town conference; but in ſaying Mr. Aſbury *appointed* ſaid conference. This I affirmed, and this Mr. Somers reported; and afterwards I explained it in a line to Mr. P. Cunnell, and as Mr. O'Kelly could not deny it, he numbers Mr. Somers and myſelf among thoſe that retail lies about him; as though being at a conference and appointing it was the ſame thing.

Your's, &c.

WILLIAM WATTERS.

To *N. Snethen.*

Vin. page 41. "Now if religion makes a man ſo much more like the devil, than he was by nature, he had better have none"—Does Mr. O'Kelly believe what is implied in this part of his friend Pope's letter? Who ever ſuppoſed that religion influenced him to leave the methodiſt connection and write the Apology? Alas, this wiſdom was not from above! *If ye have bitter envying and ſtrife in your hearts, glory not and lie not againſt the truth; for where en-*

ying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. The wisdom that is from above is first pure then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated. Vin. page 41. " Have you noticed the glaring contradictions which ſtand in the reply?" The firſt contradiction which is attributed to the reply, is founded upon my relating facts, which I did not ſee and hear. Now, if I had pretended that I was preſent, there might have been ſomething worſe than a contradiction; but what I aſſerted, I aſſerted upon the teſtimony of living witneſſes. I did not do as Mr. O'Kelly has done; he collected from Mr. Hammet, and then publiſhed as his own, what he had borrowed or ſtolen. What he relates as from his own memory, about Mr. Aſbury's diſliking the long latin name ſuperintendent, is found verbatim in Mr. Hammet's Rejoinder; as are ſeveral of the moſt material points in the Apology. A ſtrong preſumption, in my opinion, that he was more indebted to Mr. Hammet, and through him to Mr. Beverly Allen, than to his " own memory"—The ſecond contradiction does not ſtand in the reply; and the third is only nominal like the reſt. If Mr. O'Kelly had requeſted, I would give up the names of the two young men; the name of the author I did not conceal, neither did I condemn him for concealing his. I ſaid, and I ſay ſtill, that if he aſſerts things which are not true, he himſelf muſt be anſwerable to the public if he conceals his author. Ibid. " He repreſents O'Kelly as a fooliſh lying heretic"—I do repreſent ſome things in the apology as fooliſh; others as falſe; and ſome others as ſcandalous. If thoſe things are ſo proved, and Mr. O'Kelly is implicated, it cannot be any crime in me: He muſt be guilty of neceſſity, and not by my choice—Beſides, there are two ways in which things may be falſe and erroneous: The firſt, by deſign, and the ſecond through miſtake. Now, whoever will examine the reply, will, I truſt, be convin-

eed that as often as poſſible, I have endeavoured to put ſuch a conſtruction upon things, as to avoid making him guilty by deſign. As for his ſentiments or faith, if the account thereof in the reply is true (and he does not contradict it) I am ſorry for it; but the truth ought not to be concealed any longer.

Vin. page 42. "He tells what an excellent character the biſhop and conference gave him," &c. I tell no ſuch thing; it was the author of the apology that told this, ſee chap. 18. ver. 2, 4. Mr. Meacham's words are, "We anſwered that the conference had a reſpect for his character, and uſefulneſs in the church, and did not wiſh to prevent his travelling, if he was only bound in conſcience"—A ſentiment worthy of a methodiſt conference, and which will do honor to their memoirs, while they fix a deſerved odium upon the character of him, who has endeavoured to bring them into contempt. Ibid. "He tells us they did not intend to ſet in judgment upon themſelves." Where did I tell this? Ibid. "I ſay the truth, I lie not, I am ſincere, and to theſe truths, to the beſt of my judgment, with a *good conſcience*, I do ſolemnly affirm with the holy bible in my hand, and upon my *bended knees*, before the juſt judge, the Lord of Hoſts!" Alas! to what purpoſe is all this ſolemnity of affirmation? If a man be charged with falſehood and miſrepreſentation, and it ſhould be proved by lawful witneſſes; muſt he be acquitted becauſe he ſhould ſwear to his innocence to the beſt of his "*own knowledge*" and "remembrance" and "judgment?" But this ſolemn affirmation appears with much leſs grace and credibility, in the vindication, than it would have done in the apology. What dependance can be placed upon Mr. O'Kelly's knowledge, remembrance, and judgment, by thoſe who have read the vindication and the reply? I leave the reader to determine. But I have ſo much confidence in my

own *yea yea, and nay nay*, that I will not induce the public to doubt them, by impoſing an oath.

Vin. page 43. " Let him refute my charges againſt his conduct, as related in the Apology"—Has not that been done already? Ib. " Let him ſubſtantiate the abuſive parts of the Reply"—What parts of the reply are abuſive? O, the manners! Mr. O'Kelly talks about abuſe! ibid " He muſt ſtrive to prove his Epiſcopacy"—Muſt he indeed! He is in regular poſſeſſion of it; and if Mr. O'Kelly can, let him diſprove it—Mr. O'Kelly acknowledges the validity of the epiſcopacy, by continuing to exerciſe the miniſterial functions which he received by the impoſition of the biſhop's hands, &c. Mr. Aſbury never claimed nor exerciſed the right, excluſively, " to legiſlate for Chriſt's Church"—why then ſhould he prove it? I believe Mr. O'Kelly, when he tells us he will gladly drop his pen. I have not a doubt, but he wiſhes that he never had written the apology. I think I ſee in his mighty challenge, his whole heart—O! if he could have Mr. Aſbury arraigned like a criminal before a court of his own making, he would ſatiate his vengeance to the full.

Vin. page 38. " Mr. Hammet, formerly a methodiſt miniſter gives us an original letter of Mr. Weſley's, wrote to his friend"—It appears that this letter was written to Mr. Beverly Allen. This is the man, whom Mr. O'Kelly calls (" his friend.") What a friend! The reader may judge how little dependance is to be put upon a letter written in anſwer to erroneous information, received from ſuch a ſource of friendſhip. The unſuſpicious Mr. Weſley, not aware of any envious or inſidious deſigns in his correſpondent, wrote to Mr. Allen, under an impreſſion, received from wrong information. This letter was given to Mr. Hammet. Mr. O'Kelly ſeems to unite in this aſtoniſhing ſcheme of friendſhip: and (like Joab's friendſhip to Abner) uſes this letter as a

ſpear to ſtab the character of Mr. Aſbury and the conference. What ungenerous inſinuations, and inſidious arts will men make uſe of to gratify their diſappointed ambition? Come ſee my zeal for the Lord, ſaid Jehu, when his leading motive was to effect his own ambitious and ſelfiſh purpoſe.

Letter, page 39. "I was therefore a little ſurpriſed when I received ſome letters from Mr. Aſbury affirming that no perſon in Europe knew how to direct thoſe in America"—Admitting Mr. Aſbury wrote thus, the ſentiment was correct, as it related to government. Will Mr. O'Kelly deny it? Or will he ſay, that a man in Europe, three thouſand miles diſtant, is capable of governing a people in America, of whom he could have no perſonal knowledge? Mr. Weſley, tho' a great and judicious man, whoſe name and character we hold in the higheſt eſtimation, had not correct information about the American people; and conſequently in this point was led into a miſtake.

I take it for granted, that every well informed American, is fully of Mr. Aſbury's opinion.—Ibid. "Sometime after, he flatly refuſed to receive Mr. Whatcoat in the character I ſent him"—Mr. Weſley was wrongly informed, as I truſt has been proved to general ſatisfaction—Ibid "And I will bear no ſuperior"—That was well ſaid Francis; in the ſenſe you uſed it—May you and all your colleagues ſtand to *that*! Ibid. "He quietly ſet by until his friends by common conſent voted my name out of the American minutes." I thought we were told in the apology that he took a few choſen men in a clandeſtine manner, &c. How will Mr. O'Kelly reconcile his apology with this letter? But take it which way he pleaſes, could Mr. Aſbury negative the vote of the conference? Mr. O'Kelly knows he could not.

In attempting to injure Mr. Aſbury, Mr. O'Kelly has inſulted the piety, patriotiſm, and good ſenſe

of all the methodiſt connection in America; and every ſtep he takes in this work of defamation, will only ſerve to render him more notorious and contemptible. I muſt acknowledge, I am a little gratified with the parts I have to act. It is flattering to find myſelf an advocate for a cauſe, which God has delighted to honor; and of men, who have proved themſelves to be the friends of God, of religion, and their country.

To cloſe this anſwer, I ſhall refer the reader to a ſeries of letters ſubjoined; which will caſt conſiderable light upon the principle and conduct of Mr. O'Kelly. From thoſe letters, it appears, that if he could have been gratified with promotion, we ſhould, probably, have heard little or nothing from him againſt epiſcopacy, councils, or the power of biſhops. Had the preachers have given the power to him; if the councils and conferences had approved and publiſhed his manuſcripts; if they would have approved and received his doctrinal notions; and joined him in his "wonder at the ignorance of Mr. Weſley and Dr. Coke" on the ſubject of the Trinity, &c. then, no doubt, he would have been well pleaſed. But, alas! he was not made a biſhop; not approved of as an author; could not ſubject the whole connection to himſelf—And ſuch a man as he, would not yield to biſhops, councils, nor conferences. He muſt be head or nothing.

The following letters were written by one of the young men alluded to in Mr. Mead's testimony— As Mr. O'Kelly has not demanded his name, I think it not necessary to mention it now.

To Bishop Asbury. (No. 1.)

Dear Brother,

I HAVE seen the reply to Mr. O'Kelly's apology: And I discover that though the author aimed well, yet not being personally acquainted with Mr. O'Kelly, he wanted materials. It has been my opinion that his conduct is a sufficient refutation of any thing he can say against you or the church in general: however, as it is thought proper to reply, I am in possession of some particulars which may help to corroborate what has been advanced.

About the time the first council was agreed upon, I was riding in Mr. O'Kelly's district. He not only gave his consent to the plan, but was very fond of it. He had been for some time previous to this, borrowing scraps from different authors, for three pamphlets one on natural, another on moral philosophy; and a third on infant baptism, which he told me he meant to offer for publication. The evening before he set off for Baltimore, in our conversation, he spoke much in favour of the council; and said he expected there would be two or three bishops ordained: the propriety of which he urged, out of seeming compassion to you. In the course of the conversation, I embraced the idea that he expected to be one of the number; and responded accordingly: If I was deceived, he did not take the pains to undeceive me.

The minutes of the council, and circular letter from Mr. O'Kelly, came into the district, before his return. The minutes informed me he had consented

to every thing; his circular letter reprobated every thing. I thought it ſtrange; but when I ſaw him, I was more ſurpriſed than ever. The very worſt word he could ſay of the biſhop and council ſeemed to be too good—charging you with deceit, and calling you a mere ſavage, &c. I afterwards learnt the cauſe of this ſudden change: the favourite manuſcript was rejected, as unfit for publication; and there was no room to hope for a ſudden elevation, &c.

Yours, &c.

To Bishop Asbury. (No. 2.)

Dear Brother,

On Mr. O'Kelly's return from the council, all his converſation reprobated you and the members of the council. I muſt confeſs, I ſometimes felt very awful, and almoſt trembled to hear ſuch grievous reflections. I could not then, nor can I yet, reconcile them with religion.

I obſerved to him, that I feared ſuch proceedings would end in a diviſion. He would inſtantly break out in his overbearing language and manner, and ſay, he never ſaw ſuch a parcel of men as our young preachers are, in his life; they are like children; a man muſt be trod upon for fear of a diviſion. His company was truly diſtreſſing: if he were not ſighing and groaning, he was venting ſome bitter reflection againſt you, or complaining of your power. The gall was, you had ſent Mr. Ira Ellis to preſide upon the north ſide of James River; and although he had thirteen circuits, ſtill under his care, he could not endure it. About this time we began to plead for a general conference, of all the preachers; and reſolved that whatever a general conference might deter-

mine upon, we would ſubmit to. My fears of a diviſion were confirmed, and I had reaſon to believe that he was even unwilling to wait the event of a general conference.

I heard him frequently wiſh for the rule of the church. If, ſaid he, the preachers would give me the rule, I would make the church more happy by ſeparating the liberty men from the ſlave holders. He ſtill complained of the refuſal to print his pamphlet. He took conſiderable pains to convince us that we ought to make ſome powerful effort. He ſaid that nothing would ſo effectually put down the council (which I was eager to ſee done) as for the whole diſtrict to break off at once. Here the ſecret all came out. I told him I would go home before I would be concerned in a diviſion. One of the preachers then offered me a copy of a covenant in Mr. O'Kelly's own hand writing. I refuſed to ſign it, and endeavoured to ſhow them the dangerous conſequences of it. When he found that this ſcheme would not take, he inſiſted that we ſhould tell thoſe things to the people, and enter into engagements with them never to receive thoſe preachers who had ſubmitted to the council. In all his ways I could ſee the ſpirit of Abſalom.

Yours, &c.

To Bishop Asbury. (No. 3.)

Dear Brother,

I LABOURED under much difficulty, during the firſt year I travelled, about the doctrine of the Trinity; at length I reſolved all my doubts, by admitting three offices and appellations. Thus I gave three appellations to God, and acknowledged three

operations from God; but denied the perſonality. I continued in this belief, but never preached it, until I had received my ſecond appointment—Hearing Mr. O'Kelly preach, I think his text was, *He that is our God, is the God of our ſalvation*, &c. He gave me my ſcheme of the Trinity exactly, and much plainer than I could have expreſſed it myſelf: he pointedly denied the perſonality. I was much pleaſed to find his ſentiments and mine agree. I diſcloſed my opinion to him, and we reciprocated ſentiments, and confirmed each other in our new faith. We wondering at the ignorance of Mr. Weſley and Dr. Coke, in their ſermons upon this ſubject, &c. My third appointment removed me out of Mr. O'Kelly's diſtrict, into the bounds of the Greenbrier conference. Having heard of my error, as I ſuppoſe, you examined me and the other preachers reſpecting our belief in the articles of religion. In the courſe of this examination, you convinced me of my error. The next day I had an opportunity of writing to Mr. O'Kelly; and I gave him an account of my examination. I ſuppoſed him to be quite tranquil; for we had obtained a general conference, which was to take place in the enſuing fall: and I had received a letter from J. Eaſter, informing me that Mr. O'Kelly and yourſelf had made up all difficulties and differences, at Lanes-chapel conference, the ſpring before. I now flattered myſelf all would be well, as we had agreed to abide by the deciſion of the general conference. But the thought of being brought to an account about an erroneous opinion, in one of the fundamental articles of the chriſtian faith, altered his mind; and I am fully perſuaded, that from the time he received my letter, his old determination to make a party, revived, in caſe he could not obtain a majority in the general conference.

Yours, &c.

To Bishop Asbury. (No. 4.)

Dear Brother,

I HEARD no more from Mr. O'Kelly, until I came to general conference, at Baltimore. I called upon him at his lodgings, and, to my great surprise, I found his room full of preachers—I was desired to sit down and relate to them the circumstances of my examination in the Greenbrier conference. This sudden and unexpected request, and the gloomy appearance of the meeting, alarmed my fears. However, after recollecting myself a little, I answered to the best of my knowledge. But how, said Mr. O'Kelly, was it brought about? how did you proceed? &c. I then related, as near as I could, the whole over again. Then, said he, you have given up your old opinion: I answered in the affirmative. He replied, And you believe in three persons and one God. The conversation continued, and I thought, for a moment, I was insulted; but maturer reflection induced me to believe, that what I took as an offence was rather designed, by Mr. O'Kelly, as an intimation to his friends, what he might expect in the conference. From this time, I could almost have ventured to predict in what manner Mr. O'Kelly would leave the conference, especially if doctrines were considered. But I had no thought of an appeal being urged, which certainly was his strong-hold; and which, if he could have obtained, would have fixed him in his nest. He would have formed his own district; had his own preachers, &c. &c. In a word, he would have been at once on the very pinnacle of power, without the fear of control, which, I believe, his soul had long most anxiously wished. Indeed, he never could bear contradiction, which I have imputed to a constitutional defect, rather than a want of grace. If you

will compare these letters, you will think as I do, respecting the cause why he left the church at the time and in the manner he did. Why has such a sudden and great change taken place? Why, but for fear of being brought to an account for heterodox opinions; to make a party; and to gain popularity?

Yours, &c.

THE END.